

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 145 817

IR 005 183

AUTHOR Harvey, John F.
TITLE New Mexico. The University of New Mexico Libraries.
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 12p.
EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Higher Education; *Libraries; Library Facilities; Library Networks; Library Services; *State Universities; *University Libraries
IDENTIFIERS New Mexico; *University of New Mexico

ABSTRACT

This overview of the libraries under the direction of the University describes the accomplishments of the university libraries for the years 1972 to 1973 as well as projects planned for the immediate future. Descriptions of the programs, services, responsibilities and holdings of the following libraries are included: Main Campus--Zimmerman Library (general), Parish Memorial Library (business) and College of Fine Arts; North Campus--Law Library and Medical Library; and branch libraries at Gallup and Taos. Special collections, professional association memberships, interlibrary cooperation programs and library administrative organization are discussed. (JAB)

* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

John F. Harvey

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

NEW MEXICO, THE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW MEXICO LIBRARIES

Harvey, John F.

NEW MEXICO. THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO LIBRARIES

New Mexico is the fifth largest state in the Union but one of the most sparsely settled states. Its population is racially mixed and contains substantial minorities of Mexican Americans, American Indians, and Blacks. Agriculture, trade, tourism, and small industries occupy most of its citizens. Artists, craftsmen, and retirees are present in larger than average numbers. Albuquerque is the cultural, business, and financial center, and one-third of the state's population lives there.

New Mexico's state system of higher education consists of 10 junior colleges and several small and medium-sized universities. The largest and one of the oldest of these institutions is the University of New Mexico. The university serves 15,500 students, most of whom are enrolled on the Albuquerque campus. Eight hundred faculty members teach this student body. The university offers bachelor's degree programs in 70 academic fields, master's degree programs in 50 fields, and doctoral programs in 28 fields. The University of New Mexico is distinctive for its interest in Latin American studies as well as its strong departments of Spanish, Portuguese, Art, Anthropology, and History. Total 1972-73 university budget was approximately \$80,000,000. A board of regents, president, and several vice-presidents form the university's chief administrative corps. The Albuquerque campus emphasizes distinctive adobe style architecture in harmony with its desert surroundings.

The university libraries consist of: (1) the central library, Zimmerman Library, (2) the Parish Memorial Library, and (3) the College of Fine Arts Library, all three located on the main campus; (4) the Law Library and (5) the Medical Sciences Library, located on the north campus; (6) the Gallup Branch and (7) Northern Branch Libraries in Gallup and Española, respectively; (8) the Harwood Foundation Library in Taos; and (9) the Civil Engineering Research Facility Library located in the Albuquerque outskirts. Each one of these libraries is independently supervised, except for the three located outside Albuquerque, which report to the director, Division of Continuing Education, and the three main campus libraries which form the General Library and are supervised by the dean of library services.

The General Library

Each one of the University of New Mexico Libraries will be described separately, beginning with the General Library and its three separate facilities. Ninety-five percent of the university's students receive service through this library. Centralized selection, acquisitions, cataloging, serials, and administrative services are provided in the Zimmerman Library for all three of the General Library's service units.

The General Library's collection contains 670,000 cataloged and processed volumes, several thousand uncataloged serials and pamphlets, 320,000 microforms, 80,000 maps, and 1,150,000 pieces of archival material. Current serial titles

received number 16,000, and 32,000 cataloged volumes were added to the collection during the 1972-73 year. Currently, the General Library is converting its collection from the Library of Congress to the Dewey Decimal classification system. According to the Cartter Report of 1966, *An Assessment of Quality in Graduate Education*, the University of New Mexico Libraries rank among the 10 best university libraries in the western states.

The General Library's budget has been modest for many years. Its financing is obtained through the university administration, which in turn is dependent for funding upon the Board of Educational Finance, an agency of the state government in Santa Fe. Recently, however, through the success of a statewide bond issue, the library's book budget has been greatly enlarged for a limited period of time. Budget for the 1973-74 fiscal year totaled \$2.5 million (\$1.3 million for materials and \$1.2 million for personnel and other expenses), including federal grants.

In the 1973-74 year, the General Library had 150 full-time equivalent staff members, professional, clerical, and student assistants. All of the library's professionals have faculty status, rank, and title. Since its founding, the directors of the General Library have been the following:

M. Custers, 1892-1901
Kate Cunningham, 1901-1902
Julia Brown, 1902-1905
Della Sisler, 1905-1918
Wilma Loy Shelton, 1920-1947
Arthur McAnally, 1947-1949
David Otis Kelley, 1949-1972
John F. Harvey, 1972-1974
Paul Vassallo, 1974-

The General Library cooperates closely with the Library of Congress and the New Mexico State Library. It is a member of the Center for Research Libraries, the Southwest Academic Library Consortium, the Rocky Mountain Bibliographic Center for Research, and the Council of New Mexico Academic Libraries.

Major 1972-73 General Library accomplishments were the following:

1. New sets of library goals were adopted.
2. The library joined the Center for Research Libraries, Chicago.
3. An extensive series of staff and teaching faculty committees was used to encourage widespread participation in the library's administration.
4. An Administrative Council was established as a weekly forum for discussing policy matters and making decisions. In addition, monthly departmental meetings were held.
5. In cooperation with other campus libraries and with the Friends of the Libraries, a Library Lecture Series was started.
6. A Collection Development Division to supervise the library's book selection was established and manned.
7. An Administrative Services Department was established to coordinate several administrative activities.
8. A new library book storage area was occupied on the north campus.

9. Plans were made to upgrade substantially the Parish Memorial Library by increasing its book collection and stack storage space.
10. The Zimmerman III physical space was planned and construction started.
11. Service to the community and the library world through interlibrary loan was doubled during the 1972-73 year.
12. Several small reference sections were consolidated into one strong central reference department.
13. The Reference Department started a new program of close coordination with teaching departments.
14. A new service program of retrospective computer tape literature searches was started for university faculty members in cooperation with the University Technology Applications Center.
15. Free retrospective ERIC data base searches were inaugurated for education students and faculty members.
16. Library science periodical routing to library staff members was inaugurated as part of an in-service education program.
17. A new automated bookkeeping system was introduced in the Acquisitions Department.
18. An extensive series of approval and blanket book orders was established with foreign dealers.
19. A library publication program was inaugurated to cover both books and serials.
20. Improved police surveillance over the library was provided.
21. Full-time minority clerical staff members were increased from 10% to 20% of the staff.
22. The public catalogs of the Zimmerman, Fine Arts, and Parish Libraries were divided between authors and titles on the one hand and subjects on the other.
23. The Friends of the Libraries hired an executive director to coordinate its activities.

General Library plans for the immediate future include the following projects:

1. Further progress is expected toward Association of Research Libraries membership eligibility.
2. Library faculty salaries will be increased substantially until they match the salaries of teaching faculty members.
3. Serious staff shortages exist in several departments, and these shortages must be reduced.
4. A commitment is needed from the state Board of Educational Finance to construct the Zimmerman IV building in 1975.
5. A commitment is needed from the university administration to remodel Zimmerman I and II by 1975.
6. A policy and mechanism are needed for coordinating the work of the 35 campus libraries, information centers, and laboratory collections.
7. The library needs a well-organized statistical data collection program.
8. Systems analysis must be completed for the entire General Library.

The central library, now housed in the Zimmerman Library building, is the university's oldest and was founded about 1892, the year of the university's first course work. For most of the university's history, this was its only library. The central library was housed in parts of several classroom buildings for many years. The first separate campus library building was constructed in 1924 but is now

occupied by a section of the Art Department. For the past 40 years the central library has been housed in the Zimmerman building, centrally located on the main campus. Zimmerman I was constructed in 1935 and is frequently cited as an excellent New Mexico example of the modified pueblo style of southwestern architecture. John Gaw Meem was the architect. Currently, this portion of the building houses the Special Collections Department, three large and ornate reading rooms, the Reserve Book Section, and the nine-story stack tower. Attractive murals decorate the walls of this area.

Zimmerman II was constructed in 1966 and provides more modern library facilities than Zimmerman I, to which it is connected. It contains the library's Administrative Services Department, Reference Department, Circulation Department, Bibliography Division, and large Technical Services Division. An exhibit gallery is housed on the second floor. This building section contains four floors and merges directly into Zimmerman III, which was completed in 1974. Zimmerman III contains a large periodical reading room in the basement, plus shelving and reading areas on the separate floors. Zimmerman II and III are carpeted throughout. The entire building seats 1,100 readers in locked carrels, open carrels, and reading room tables and chairs.

Zimmerman Library is rich in special collections. The beautiful Clinton P. Anderson Room in Zimmerman I contains a special collection of western Americana. The Coronado Room contains an extensive collection of books and other materials concerning the history and culture of New Mexico. Several hundred bound volumes of photostats of the archives of Spain, Mexico, and New Mexico—letters, manuscripts, documents, and state archival materials assembled by the U.S. Historical Records Survey—may be found here. The business history collection contains records of the First National Bank of Santa Fe, the Ilfeld Company, Gross Kelly & Company, Bond & Son, Inc., and several other companies. The Vandeveld Collection of Mexican materials was purchased in 1939 by a special appropriation of the state legislature. The Catron Collection is an extensive and valuable library of Spanish and Mexican publications, those of the 16th to the 19th century. The Otero Collection contains volumes on the Southwest and valuable manuscript items. The library's map collection, housed in the Special Collections Department, is the largest in the state.

Zimmerman Library serves students and faculty members in all main campus university departments, and through membership in the Friends of the Libraries, services are available to nonstudents. Loan services are offered by the Circulation Department through the stacks, the circulation desk, the reserve desk, and the Interlibrary Loan Section in Zimmerman I and II. In 1972-73, 260,000 volumes were loaned directly to users, and 9,000 interlibrary loans were sent and received. In that year, 850,000 persons passed through Zimmerman Library's turnstiles, and the library was open 84 hours and 7 days per week. The Interlibrary Loan Section maintained its records on-line in the University Computing Center. Circulation per student averaged 20 volumes per year for 1970 to 1973.

The Reference Department coordinates advice and assistance to readers, and its professional librarians and clerks staff the Zimmerman II reference desk during all of the library's hours of opening. As New Mexico's largest research collection,

the Zimmerman Library is a bibliographic resource center for the entire state, and it is linked by teletype to the library world. Several special reference projects enable the library to give superior service to its users. The library is a regional U.S. government publications depository, and most of its documents are located on the third floor of the Zimmerman II building. The government publication collection is the strongest in the state. Material is received regularly from the Pan American Union, the United Nations, and the state government agencies of New Mexico. Microform materials are available to cover a number of serial titles and the publications of AEC, NASA, ERIC, HRAF, and many other agencies.

The Reference Department schedules hundreds of library orientation lectures each semester which involve whole classes of students. Service is provided to blind students through a collection of braille material. The Ethnic Studies Section is one of a very few existing minority reference services in American university libraries. Materials of Afro-American, Chicano, and Native American Studies can easily be accessed through this desk. Current bibliographies and vertical file material on ethnic studies are readily available.

Other Zimmerman Library departments carry out important responsibilities also, but work behind the scenes in serving the user. The Collection Development Division located in Zimmerman II guide the selection of library material and controls the General Library's materials budget. The Administrative Services Department provides General Library-wide services in personnel, finance, physical plant maintenance, and receiving library material. Planning, public relations, data collection, and automation are responsibilities of this department. The Administrative Services photocopy section is located in the basement of Zimmerman II. A half million pages of copies were produced in this section in 1972-73. Microfilm, microfiche, and photocopies are available as well as velo binding. Coin-operated typing rooms are provided in two locations.

Technical Services Departments include Acquisitions, Catalog, Processing, and Serials, each one of which carries out its traditional university role for the General Library. All four of these departments will soon be located in Zimmerman II and III. The Acquisitions Department orders and receives monographic library material. Under its supervision is the Gifts and Exchanges Section. The Gifts and Exchanges program is prospering, and 700 donors contribute 35,000 pieces of material annually to the General Library. The Catalog Department carries out original cataloging, and the Processing Department carries out the clerical task of cataloging. The Serials Department carries out all serials responsibilities except cataloging.

The headquarters of the Southwest Academic Library Consortium is located in Zimmerman Library. This consortium includes the libraries of 33 institutions of higher education in New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. It was founded in 1967 by Dean James E. Sublette of Eastern New Mexico University and David Otis Kelley.

The William J. Parish Memorial Library

This library is located on the ground floor of the Business and Administrative Sciences School building. It contains 20,000 volumes of material related to the

study of business, taxes, labor relations, accounting, economics, and related fields. Both periodicals and books are represented in this collection. The library was established in 1967 when the Business and Administrative Sciences building was constructed and has developed rapidly since that time. The staff consists of two full-time persons, plus student assistants. Neosha Mackey has been the librarian since 1968.

Parish Memorial Library physical facilities are among the most pleasant on the campus. The library has an attractive and modern reading room seating 80 students and faculty members at one time. Adding and calculating machines are available for use. A seminar room and special group study rooms are also available. Books are selected by the Business faculty and the Parish librarian. All acquisitions, cataloging, and preparation-for-the-shelves work for this library is carried out by the Technical Services Division in Zimmerman Library. In 1972-73, the number of users was 65,000 and the number of home loans was 10,000. Immediate plans for developing this library include remodeling and extensive carpeting. The recently enlarged book collection enables the library to provide much improved service for its students and faculty members.

The College of Fine Arts Library

This library was established in 1962 in the Fine Arts Center on the main campus. The library contains the material for art, music, theater arts, and architecture, and services these departments of the university. It has grown rapidly to house 45,000 volumes and 11,000 recordings and tapes. The staff consists of two professional librarians and three full-time clerks. Donald Roberts was the first fine arts librarian, 1963-1968, and Ellen Bellingham the second, 1968-1973; James Wright was acting librarian, 1973-1974.

The Fine Arts Library's physical facilities include a periodical reading room, stack area, circulation desk, record cataloging office, and reading room area. A special room houses rare books and other valuable resources, and two practice rooms with pianos are located in the library. An audio center makes tape material available for use to large numbers of university students through specially designed listening facilities. The library has started a collection of manuscript material relating to the work of well-known composers and conductors. The Archives of Southwestern Music is located here; it consists of a large collection of tape recordings of the music indigenous to this area. A complete Fine Arts Library card catalog is also located here. During the 1972-73 year, 50,000 books and periodicals were loaned, plus 100,000 records and tapes; 125,000 individuals passed through the front door turnstiles. All acquisitions and cataloging work for this library is carried out by the Technical Services Division in the Zimmerman Library.

The School of Law Library

This library is housed in Bratton Hall, completed in 1971, on the university's north campus. It contains 110,000 volumes and is augmented by approximately

600 volumes each month. The library includes comprehensive collections of British and U.S. federal and state court reports, including special and annotated series, session laws, current state and federal statutes, legal treatises, periodicals, encyclopedias and digests, administrative reports, and other classes of legal materials. Special collections are being developed in American Indian law and in water law.

On the library's upper floor, the main reading room contains sets and individual titles of essential legal material. The New Mexico Collection and the Rare Book Collection as well as the Audio-Visual Collection are also located on the upper floor. The lower floor houses the main circulating library collection, organized in the Library of Congress classification. Duplicate circulating copies of many essential materials are available on this floor. In a basement stack area, several collections are maintained including the foreign law collection and the state documents.

Legal reference questions are handled by the legal research librarian located near the main reading room. Typewriters and photocopy machines are located in a typing room. Interlibrary loan and circulation service are maintained. Lawyer's dictation rooms are available also. A browsing room is maintained in which newspapers, popular magazines, legal periodicals, and new books are shelved. Increasingly, the library is called upon to purchase material in the social sciences to supplement its legal collection. Major sets of legal material are available in microfilm.

Directors of the Law Library have been Arie Poldervaart, 1947-1963, and Myron Fink, 1963 to date; 14 additional staff members work in this library at the present time. The library's 1973-74 budget totals \$225,000, and circulation totals 14,300 items per year. This is the largest law library in New Mexico, and it is a member of the Council of New Mexico Academic Libraries.

The Library of the Medical Sciences

This library is presently housed in Medical School Building Number 2 on the university's north campus. The building houses the Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Medical Association's library material. The library contains a reading room with recent essential biomedical journal issues shelved there. Additional rooms house education media, a stack area, audiovisual material, and a MEDLINE terminal. An office suite is located on the second floor. Tours for student and faculty groups are arranged. A new building is being planned to serve this library.

The library's collection has grown to more than 74,000 items, including books, serials, pamphlets, technical reports, microfilm, microfiche, video cassettes, audio tapes and disks, slides, films, and filmstrips. It receives 1,500 current biomedical serial titles. Each year the library adds about 1,400 book and 2,800 journal volumes to the collection. Soon the Library of the Medical Sciences will take over service to the College of Pharmacy, and the university's collection of pharmacy material will be moved there.

Several national biomedical information network services are made available.

MEDLINE service accesses more than 400,000 journal citations to more than 1,100 important biomedical journals. TOXICON, SDILINE, ERIC, NTIS, CAC, and *Engineering Index* are other biomedical information network services available. Numerous biomedical periodical indexes are located in the library.

The Medical Sciences Library houses a Health Science Information and Communication Center jointly funded through a grant from the National Library of Medicine. Through this program, the following services are offered to New Mexico health personnel: (1) dial access tape library; (2) reference and information searches; (3) photocopying of items requested by mail or telephone; (4) MEDLINE searches; (5) consultation with regional medical program and School of Medicine faculty members; and (6) specialized information for planning, evaluating, and funding New Mexico health projects. Interlibrary loan service is provided to other libraries throughout the country.

The library staff brings together experts in the fields of information science and librarianship, audiovisual aids, education, and communication in an interdisciplinary approach to problems in medical communication and education. There are 21 full-time staff members. Robert T. Divett has been director since 1963. The Medical Sciences Library was founded in 1963 at the time the Medical School was founded. Total library budget was \$231,000 for the 1972-73 year. The Medical Sciences Library participates in the activities of the Council of New Mexico Academic Libraries. It has pioneered in the use of computer and data processing techniques and in information management.

Other University Libraries

The libraries located in the Gallup and Northern Branches and in the Harwood Foundation are small collections organized for local use. The Gallup Branch contains approximately 5,000 volumes under the supervision of a professional librarian. It serves a student body of 300 full-time equivalents which is 40% American Indian and is located in the western part of the state. The new Northern Branch is under the supervision of a professional librarian and contains only 100 volumes to serve 400 full-time equivalent students at the present time. This branch shares facilities with the nearby Technical and Vocational School. The Harwood Foundation provides public library and art gallery service for the 4,000 people of Taos, New Mexico. It is supervised by a professional librarian and its collection totals 20,000 volumes. The Civil Engineering Research Facility, supervised by the university's College of Engineering, contains a small laboratory collection of technical material which supports its activities.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Gillett, Theresa, and Helen McIntyre, compilers. *Catalog of Luso-Brazilian Material in the University of New Mexico Libraries*, Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, N.J., 1970, 961 pp.

Hughes, Dorothy Belle, *Pueblo on the Mesa*, Univ. New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1939, 151 pp.

Ruoss, G. Martin, ed., *New Mexico Bibliography for the General Reader*, Univ. New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, 1971, 36 pp.

Ruoss, G. Martin, and Marilyn Ruoss, compilers, *New Mexico Church and Synagogue Library Directory*, Univ. New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, 1973, 30 pp.

Sublette, Ned, compiler, *Discography of Hispanic Music in the Fine Arts Library of the University of New Mexico*, Univ. New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, 1973, 110 pp.

Serials

Bellingham, Henry, ed., *Library Staff Newsletter*, Univ. New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, Volume 1-, 1970-, monthly, 6-20 pages per issue.

Divett, Robert, compiler, *Catalog of Audiovisual Material*, Univ. New Mexico Library of the Medical Sciences, Albuquerque, Volume 1-, 1973-, annually, 12-15 pages per issue.

Divett, Robert, ed., *Library Bulletin*, Univ. New Mexico Library of the Medical Sciences, Albuquerque, Volume 1-, 1965-, monthly, 4-12 pages per issue.

Fink, Myron, ed., *New Acquisitions*, Univ. New Mexico Law School Library, Albuquerque, Volume 1-, 1965-, annually, 4-12 pages per issue.

Harvey, John F., ed., *Library Annual Report*, Univ. New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, Volume 1-, 1950-, 10-25 pages per issue.

Hedman, Kenneth, ed., *Southwest Academic Library Consortium Newsletter*, Univ. New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, Volume 1-, 1971-, semiannually, 5-20 pages per issue.

Ince, David, ed., *New Titles in Zimmerman Library*, Univ. New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, Volume 1-, 1974-, weekly, 6 pages per issue.

Quintana, Helena, ed., *Ethnic Studies Bibliography*, Univ. New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, Volume 1-, 1972-, monthly, 5-15 pages per issue.

Ruoss, Marilyn, ed., *Library Serials List*, Univ. New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, Volume 1-, 1971-, monthly, 1,300 pages per issue (microfiche).

Shea, Patricia, compiler, *Library Exchange List*, Univ. New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, Volume 1-, 1970-, bimonthly, 5-15 pages per issue.

JOHN F. HARVEY

NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC LIBRARY

The New Orleans Public Library, a department of the municipal government, serves—on a free basis—the world-port City of New Orleans, Louisiana, with a population in 1970 of 593,471. In 1970, the total Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area had a population of 1,045,809, and while the neighboring parishes (synonymous with counties) have independent systems, many of their residents choose to purchase library cards at an annual fee because of the greater depth and more extensive scope of the reference material. The 1973 operating budget of \$2,259,781 amounted to a per capita operating expense of \$3.81, with a circulation figure for the same year of 1,276,085, or 2.15 books per capita. No registration files

are maintained. The total of in-house and telephone patron inquiries was 570,205 in 1973. The staff totals 160, of whom 38 are professionals. Since 1943, all employees except the city librarian and his first assistant have had civil service status. The New Orleans Public Library system is made up of the central library, located in the Civic Center; two regional branches; four major branches; five neighborhood branches; and two bookmobiles. A number of small circulating collections are maintained at homes for the aged, day care centers, community centers, and the parish prison.

While the New Orleans Public Library can trace its direct origin to 1843, it is interesting to note some of the earlier unsuccessful attempts to establish public libraries. As long ago as 1771, the Spanish colonial government shipped a number of crates of books from Spain for a school library which would also be available to trustworthy citizens. Although the books arrived safely, they were apparently stored for a few years and gradually disappeared without ever becoming part of a library (1). Except for a number of private subscription libraries, nothing more was heard on the subject until 1805. In that year, the territorial legislature authorized the creation of public libraries in all parishes. This was a thoughtful gesture, but nothing concrete resulted from it, except, perhaps, a hope for the future.

The New Orleans Library Society was chartered in 1805 and authorized to sell stock and conduct lotteries. Anyone could gain membership by paying an annual fee. By 1827 it contained 7,200 volumes in French and English and was open 3 hours a day. But by 1828 a fire had destroyed most of its books and it was in debt. By 1830 it was defunct (2).

Judah Touro, one of the greatest local philanthropists of the 19th century, founded the Free Library Society on April 10, 1824. It was later known as the Touro Free Library Society. Plans to erect a building never materialized and the collection which started out with over 1,000 volumes was housed in the Presbyterian Church. Interest eventually lessened and the society apparently drifted into oblivion some time before 1838 (3).

The New Orleans Commercial Library Society was begun on March 29, 1831 and was undoubtedly a reaction to the failure of the New Orleans Library Society. Members paid \$5 each year for its privileges and at its peak in 1842 had access to 6,000 books. It was aided by appropriations from the state of \$1,000 per year in 1833 and in the years 1838 through 1842. Even the city council appropriated some money for its support for a short time. In 1842 the library failed and its doors were closed.

This misfortune was short-lived, however, for Benjamin Franklin French, a local historian and author of several history books about the state, bought out the collection and opened it to the public at no charge. It was housed in the Merchants' Exchange until 1843, when a wealthy merchant, Abijah Fisk, died and willed his home in the French Quarter to the city to be used as a library. Three years passed and the city did nothing about this bequest, so Fisk's brother, Alvarez, purchased Benjamin Franklin French's library of 6,000 volumes and presented it to the city.